

GROWTH OF GERMAN INFLUENCE

tion of the transportation problem. Hence many attempts were made by the Big Powers to gain supremacy in this vital sector.

In the Weimar era, Germany scored two notable successes in this connection. Having obtained an exclusive concession, the German Junkers Company operated all internal airlines between 1927 and 1932. German firms and technicians participated in the construction of the Transiranian Railway. A German company built the Bandar Shah-Shahi sector in 1928, and many German technicians were employed in the Scandinavian Consortium Karnpsax, which in 1933 took over all the remaining construction work of the railroad. The higher personnel of the railroad was recruited in Germany and supplemented by several Iranians who had studied and practiced in Berlin. In 1937 the Iranian Ministry of Roads and Communications awarded ten scholarships for the study of railway operations in Germany. Important orders for locomotives were placed with German firms, one of which provided a parlor train for the use of the Shah. In 1939-1940 German firms supplied to Iran the bulk of imported rolling stock.⁵

Germany exported to Iran automobiles and airplanes. She had a virtual monopoly for the supply of motorcycles. For instance, in 1939-1940, of 326 imported motorcycles 321 came from Germany and only 5 from Britain.

The field of maritime communications was not forgotten either. Regular service between Hamburg and Bremen on the one side and the ports of the Persian Gulf on the other was maintained by the German steamship company Hansa Linie, whose ships visited Iran twice a month. Branch offices of the line were

established in Teheran, Bushire, Bandar Shahpur, and Ahwaz. In the last years before World War II the German flag in Iranian ports was second only to the British. It overtook the Soviet and Norwegian standards.

The Third Reich paid special attention to air transportation in Iran. Reviving the traditions of the old Junkers Company, the Deutsche Lufthansa inaugurated, in 1937, an airline that linked Berlin with Bagdad, Teheran, and Kabul via Tirana, Athens, Rhodes, and Damascus. It was possible to reach Teheran from Berlin

s Unless otherwise indicated, statistical data in this chapter are quoted from the *Statistique annuelle du commerce exterieur de l'Iran*.